

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SECTO 09014 061759Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 /026 W
-----117453 061800Z /44
O 061734Z AUG 78 ZFF-6
FM USDEL SECRETARY IN JERUSALEM
TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTO 09014

EXDIS

FOR CHARGE FROM SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS)
SUBJECT: APPROACH TO SYRIA ON SITUATION IN NORTHERN LEBANON

REF: SECTO 09008

1. FYI. DURING SECRETARY'S TALKS TODAY IN ISRAEL, PM
BEGIN TOLD HIM GOI HAD RECEIVED REPORT FROM VERY
RELIABLE SOURCES LAST NIGHT THAT THE SYRIANS ARE
PREPARING AN ALL-OUT ATTACK ON CHRISTIANS BETWEEN
AUGUST 8-10. BEGIN ASKED SECRETARY TO MAKE AN APPROACH
IN DAMASCUS NOT ONLY ON THIS SUBJECT BUT, AGAIN, TO TRY
TO ESTABLISH FIRM CEASEFIRE. SECRETARY PROMISED TO
SEND INSTRUCTION URGENTLY AND TO REPORT TO ISRAELI
GOVERNMENT ASAP. END FYI.

2. PLEASE MAKE APPROACH ON SECRETARY'S BEHALF ALONG
FOLLOWING LINES AT HIGHEST LEVEL YOU CAN REACH QUICKLY
WITH HOPES OF GETTING AUTHORITATIVE RESPONSE:

-- SECRETARY AND OTHERS IN USG ARE WORKING ALL OUT TO
REVERSE THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE HOUSE ON SYRIAN AID.

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REFER TO MY TESTIMONY AND INSTRUCTIONS PRESIDENT AND I
HAVE GIVEN TO GET A CONGRESSIONAL REVERSAL. (SEE
REFTEL)

-- WE ARE RECEIVING REPORTS FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES
THAT LARGE-SCALE MILITARY ACTION IN LEBANON IS PLANNED
TO BEGIN IN PERIOD AUGUST 8-10.

-- WE WOULD APPRECIATE MOST SERIOUS SYRIAN APPRIASAL
OF SUCH REPORTS AND ASSESSMENT OF LIKELIHOOD OF RENEWED
ATTACKS BY ONE SIDE OR OTHER.

-- WE ARE ALSO CONCERNED THAT CEASEFIRE IN BEIRUT
IS NOT HOLDING FIRMLY. WE WOULD WELCOME SYRIAN
VIEWS ON WHAT FURTHER PROGRESS CAN BE MADE IN
DEFUSING FLASHPOINTS IN CITY.

-- WE BELIEVE THAT US AND SYRIA SHARE INTEREST IN
PREVENTING NEW ROUND OF FIGHTING IN LEBANON AND THAT
RENEWAL OF FIGHTING WOULD RAISE UNACCEPATBLE RISKS.
WE APPROACH SYRIAN GOVERNMENT IN SPIRIT OF THIS INTEREST
AND ASK THAT SYRIAN INFLUENCE BE USED TO THIS END.

3. USE YOUR DISCRETION IN ADAPTING THESE POINTS IN
LIGHT OF YOUR PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS TO ELICIT FULLEST
RESPONSE POSSIBLE SO YOU CAN ASSESS SYRIAN INTENTION
AND EXPECTATIONS.

VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SECTO, ARMISTICE, CHRISTIANS, DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIONS, COMBAT OPERATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978SECTO09014
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780322-0426
Format: TEL
From: SECRETARY JERUSALEM
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780893/aaaadadd.tel
Line Count: 84
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: bd731d68-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 78 SECTO 9008
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1823743
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: APPROACH TO SYRIA ON SITUATION IN NORTHERN LEBANON
TAGS: OVIP, PEPR, MPOL, MOPS, LE, SY, US, (VANCE, CYRUS R)
To: DAMASCUS STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/bd731d68-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014